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Message Text

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66011
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EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT PARIS 10913 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO ISLAMABAD 03 APR 78

QUOTE S E C R E T PARIS 10913

EXDIS

E.O.11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: MNUC FR PK
SUBJ: FRENCH REPROCESSING PLANT SALE TO PAKISTAN

REF: PARIS 10663

1. SUMMARY: DURING MARCH 31 DISCUSSIONS AT FRENCH MFA, THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE REPROCESSING PLANT FOR PAKISTAN WAS WELL REVIEWED. THE GOF APPEARS TO BE GOING THROUGH THE PACES ON THE "ADD-ON" FACILITY STUDY BUT WITHOUT MUCH ENTHUSIASM ON THE PART OF CEA. JACOMET HAD NOT BEEN AWARE OF THE FULL EXTENT OF USG INFORMATION ON PAKISTAN BOMB-MAKING EFFORTS WHICH HAD BEEN SHARED

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WITH THE GOF IN AUGUST 1977. NYE REVIEWED THE ARGUMENTS FOR CANCELLATION OF THE CONTRACT. JACOMET SAID IT WOULD BE A DIFFICULT DECISION FOR GISCARD, BUT JACOMET WAS CERTAIN THE FRENCH PRESIDENT WOULD MAKE THE RIGHT DECISION. END SUMMARY.

2. ON MARCH 31 QUAI NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION ADVISER

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JACOMET AND DIRECTOR OF NUCLEAR AFFAIRS LOUET MET WITH DEPARTMENT(T) JOSEPH NYE AND EMBOFF AND REVIEWED SEVERAL SUBJECTS. THE PAKISTAN MATTER RECEIVED MAJOR ATTENTION AND THE EXCHANGE WAS VERY FRANK AND COVERED ALL ASPECTS. JACOMET BEGAN BY NOTING THAT THE GOF WAS AGREED THAT IF THE PAKS WOULD NOT GIVE ON THE CURRENT CONTRACT, THEN FRANCE WOULD DROP ANY FURTHER WORK ON IT. THERE MAY BE RENEWED PRESSURE BY THE PAKS ON THE NEW FRENCH GOVERNMENT ONCE IT GETS ESTABLISHED; HOWEVER, THANKFULLY, JACOMET ADDED, THE RECENT /RENCH ELECTIONS WERE PAST WITHOUT A SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC DEBATE ON THE MATTER. THE GOF IS PREPARING A PROPOSAL ON THE "ADD-ON" MIXING WHICH WILL TAKE SEVERAL MORE WEEKS (5-7 WEEKS) AND THEN JACOMET WILL PUT A FULLY STAFFED OPTIONS PAPER TO THE PRESIDENT FOR HIS DECISION ON THE FUTURE COURSE.

3. NYE BRIEFLY REVIEWED INFORMATION WHICH USG CONSIDERED RELIABLE THAT THE PAKS WERE ENGAGED IN FOUR AREAS OF STUDY AND EXPERIMENT ONLY USEFUL FOR MAKING NUCLEAR WEAPONS. THIS INFORMATION HAD BEEN GIVEN TO THE GOF IN AUGUST 1977. JACOMET APPEARED MOST INTERESTED AND SAID THAT SUCH INFORMATION WAS NOT IN THE MATERIAL GIVEN TO HIM WHEN HE BEGAN HIS CURRENT ASSIGNMENT SEVERAL MONTHS AGO.

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4. NYE THEN BRIEFLY COVERED US RATIONALE SUPPORTING CANCELLATION OF THE CONTRACT. HE NOTED THAT THE US LAWRENCE LIVERMORE LAB HAD MADE A CAREFUL STUDY OF THE SITUATION AND CONCLUDED THAT THE GOP COULD NOT FINISH THE PLANT AND MAKE IT OPERATE WITHOUT CONTINUED FRENCH HELP. IF THE GOF CANCELS THE CONTRACT, THE US COULD CONTINUE ITS ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES; FRANCE COULD STEP IN TO HELP MEET REAL PAK NUCLEAR NEEDS FOR ENERGY; PERHAPS IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA WOULD HELP IN FINANCING; AND THE

US COULD ASSIST THE GOP IN MEETING NEEDED SECURITY SUPPORT VIS-A-VIS INDIA. SHOULD FRANCE CONTINUE WITH THE PLANT, BELIEVING SUCH TO BE THE BEST COURSE FOR NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION OBJECTIVES, AND IN A FEW YEARS THE UNSTABLE SITUATION IN PAKISTAN PRODUCES A REGIME THAT SEES AN ADVANTAGE TO HAVING A NUCLEAR CAPABILITY, THEN THE OPERATING REPROCESSING PLANT WILL WELL SERVE THEIR PURPOSES AND THE FAILURE OF THE SAFEGUARDS SYSTEM WILL SEND A SIGNIFICANT SHOCK WAVE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, INCLUDING INTO THE FRENCH PUBLIC. CONTINUATION OF THE PLANT WILL CAUSE THE GLENN AMENDMENT TO STOP FURTHER USG ASSISTANCE WHICH WILL

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BRING ON A DESCENDING SPIRAL IN US-PAK RELATIONS AND, WITH THAT, AN INCREASING SENSE OF POLITICAL INSTABILITY IN THE REGION. CLEARLY THE BEST APPROACH IS TO CANCEL THE PLANT. IF THIS BECOMES THE FIRM DECISION OF THE GOF, THEN A JOINTLY COORDINATED APPROACH TO PAKISTAN COULD MINIMIZE THE ADVERSE POLITICAL IMPACT TO FRANCE AND OCCUPY THE ATTENTION OF THE PAKISTANI PUBLIC ON USEFUL PROGRAMS FOR ITS REAL ENERGY NEEDS AND HELP EET ITS SECURITY NEEDS THROUGH CONVENTIONAL MEANS. JACOMET WAS MOST INTERESTED IN THIS RATIONALE, ASKED QUESTIONS TO HELP HIS UNDERSTANDING, AND APPEARED TO WELCOME IT AS A REASONABLE BASIS FOR POSSIBLE FUTURE FRENCH ACTION.

5. US CONCERN AND ACTION ON THE FRG-BRAZIL CONTRACT
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WAS ALSO REVIEWED AS THE GOF BELIEVES THAT CONTRACT TO BE MORE SERIOUS THAN THE PAKISTAN PLANT. NYE REVIEWED THE SEVERAL HIGH-LEVEL USG EFFORTS OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS AND PROMISED THAT THE GOF WOULD BE KEPT UP-TO-DATE ON USG FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOB AND FRG. JACOMET APPEARED TO WELCOME THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THE USG IS CONTINUING TO PUSH HARD ON DELAY-CANCELLATION OF THE BRAZIL REPROCESSING CONTRACT. HE NOTED THAT THE GOF WAS HELPING BY MAKING NO EFFORTS TO COMPETE WITH THE FRG IN BRAZIL NUCLEAR MATTERS.
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